



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHILLICOTHE MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO VIOLATING FEDERAL FIREARMS LAW

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a Chillicothe man pleaded guilty today to violating federal firearms law.

Michael Dewayne Cooper, 33, of Chillicothe, Mo., pleaded guilty this morning before U.S. District Judge Scott O. Wright to being a felon in possession of a firearm.

Cooper was charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury in Jefferson City on August 23, 2002, Graves said. By pleading guilty today, **Cooper** admitted that he was in possession of a Smith and Wesson .38 revolver on June 23, 2002. Possession of any firearm at that time would have been illegal, Graves explained, as a result of **Cooper's** 1998 criminal felony conviction for forgery in Howard County, Mo., and his 1995 criminal felony conviction for leaving the scene of a motor vehicle accident in Randolph County, Mo.

A sentencing hearing will be scheduled sometime after the completion of a presentence investigation by the U.S. Probation Office. The sentence will be determined according to the United States Sentencing Guidelines.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jim Lynn. It was investigated by the Boonville Police Department, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, and the Missouri State Highway Patrol.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow